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pressing the workpiece against a polishing surface of a turntable to polish a surface of the workpiece by applying independently adjustable polishing pressures to substantially concentric circular areas of the workpiece, respectively, said polishing pressures including a first polishing pressure applied to a central circular area of the workpiece, a second polishing pressure applied to a first annular area of the workpiece located outside of the central circular area, and a third polishing pressure applied to a second annular area of the workpiece located outside of the first annular area.

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38. (Amended) A method of polishing a surface of a workpiece, the method comprising:
holding a workpiece with a top ring;
applying a first polishing pressure to a central portion of the workpiece;
applying a second polishing pressure to an outer circumferential portion of the workpiece,
wherein the first polishing pressure is different than the second polishing pressure, and the first and second polishing pressures are independently adjustable; and
pressing a presser ring against a polishing surface under a pressing force which is variable.

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45. (Amended) A method of polishing a surface of a workpiece comprising:
holding a workpiece by a top ring;
pressing the workpiece by the top ring against a polishing surface;
supplying fluid pressures in a plurality of chambers formed in said top ring to provide polishing pressure to a central area and an outer circumferential area, wherein a radial width along a radius of said top ring of an outer one of said plurality of chambers is narrower than a radius of a central one of said plurality of chambers;
wherein said fluid pressures in said respective chambers are controllable independently of each other on the basis of the pressures detected by pressure sensors.

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49. (Amended) A workpiece carrier for holding a workpiece and pressing the workpiece against a polishing surface, said workpiece carrier comprising:
a top ring for supporting the workpiece to be polished;

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a pressing mechanism for pressing the workpiece against the polishing surface, said pressing mechanism being configured to apply a first polishing pressure to a central circular area of the workpiece and a second polishing pressure to an annular area of the workpiece that is outside of the central circular area, wherein the first polishing pressure and the second polishing pressure are controllable independently of each other; and

a presser ring vertically movably disposed around said top ring, said presser ring being pressed against a polishing surface under a pressing force which is variable.

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68. (Amended) A method for polishing a surface of a workpiece, the method comprising:
holding a workpiece by a top ring;

pressing the workpiece against a polishing surface by applying polishing pressure to the workpiece, said polishing pressure including a first polishing pressure applied to a central circular area of the workpiece and a second polishing pressure applied to a first annular area of the workpiece located outside of said central circular area, said first polishing pressure and said second polishing pressure being controllable independently of each other; and

pressing a presser ring against said polishing surface under a pressing force which is variable.

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70. (Amended) A method for polishing a surface of a workpiece, the method comprising:
holding a workpiece by a top ring;

pressing the workpiece against a polishing surface by applying polishing pressure to the workpiece, the polishing pressure including a first polishing pressure applied to a central circular area of the workpiece and a second polishing pressure applied to a first annular area of the workpiece located outside of the central circular area of the workpiece,

the first polishing pressure and the second polishing pressure being controllable independently of each other; and

pressing an area of the polishing surface around the workpiece with a presser ring under a pressing force which is variable.

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21. (Amended) A method for polishing a surface of a workpiece, the method comprising:
holding a workpiece by a top ring; and

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pressing the workpiece against a polishing surface by applying polishing pressure to the
workpiece, the polishing pressure including a first polishing pressure applied to a central circular area
of the workpiece, a second polishing pressure applied to a first annular area of the workpiece located
outside of the central circular area, and a third polishing pressure applied to a second annular area of
the workpiece located outside of the first annular area; and

pressing a presser ring against said polishing surface under a pressing force which is variable.